

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 2677

S E C R E T TEHRAN 7177

EXDIS -- HANDLE AS NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MASS, JO, US

SUBJ: AIR DEFENSE EQUIPMENT FOR JORDAN

REF: A) STATE 173600 B) STATE 173793 C) STATE 174118

D) STATE 174371 E) TEHRAN 7138

1. DELIVERED MESSAGES REFTELS A, B, C, AND D TO KING HUSSEIN AND PRIME MINISTE
RIFAI AT 11:45 LOCAL TIME JULY 24 IN
NOWSHAHR. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY AS ELOQUENT A PLEA AS I COULD
MAKE ENDING WITH THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION THAT
THEY ACCEPT YOUR THIRD OPTION. KING AND PRIME MINISTER
THEN ADJOURNED TO NEXT ROOM, TALKED AND WORKED TOGETHER FOR
ABOUT 30 MINUTES AFTER WHICH THEY PRESENTED ME WITH FOLLOWING
TWO MESSAGES.

2. BEGIN TEXT: JULY 24, 1975. MR. SECRETARY, I HAVE
JUST RECEIVED YOUR MESSAGE THROUGH MY GOOD FRIEND AMBASSADOR
HELMS. I REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT NOTHING IN THAT MESSAGE
ENCOURAGES ME TO CHANGE MY POSITION. THIS WHOLE CRISIS
WAS NOT OF OUR MAKING, AND I SEE NO REASON WHY JORDAN AND
I HAVE TO PROVIDE ANYONE WITH A FACE-SAVING FORMULA AT
OUR EXPENSE. I WOULD RATHER NOT REMAIN AT JORDAN'S HELM
FOR AN ADDITIONAL MOMENT THAN HAVE TO ACCEPT THE HUMILITY
(READ HUMILIATION) OF ISRAELI DICTATES OR OTHER IMPLIED

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THREATS. (PARAGRAPH) I AM GRATEFUL FOR ALL YOUR AND

THE PRESIDENT'S EFFORTS. I HOPE THE FUTURE MAY BRING HAPPIER DAYS FOR ALL OF US. SINCERELY, HUSSEIN I. END OF TEXT.

3. PLEASE PASS FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM PR ME MINISTER RIFAI TO AMBASSADOR PICKERING. BEGIN TEXT: DEAR TOM: PLEASE BE SO KIND AS TO ASK ABDULLAH SALAH TO THANK SENATORS PERCY, JAVITS AND HUMPHREY ON BEHALF OF HIS MAJESTY FOR THEIR MESSAGES TO HIM. HE WILL BE WRITING THEM DIRECTLY TO EXPRESS HIS APPRECIATION FOR THEIR CONCERN AS SOON AS HE RETURNS TO AMMAN. (NOTE: CURRENT PLANS CALL FOR JORDANIAN PARTY TO RETURN TO AMMAN ON SATURDAY, JULY 26, 1975.) (PARAGRAPH) THESE ARE SAD DAYS FOR US, TOM. BUT THE SUN ALWAYS RISES NO MATTER HOW LONG THE DARKNESS OF THE NIGHT LASTS-- AT LEAST THAT IS WHAT WE HOPE. GRATEFULLY YOURS, ZAID. END OF TEXT.

4. AFTER DELIVERING THE FOREGOING MESSAGES, WHICH I MUST SAY WAS DONE WITH GENUINE SADNESS, THE KING AND PRIME MINISTER LISTENED ATTENTATIVELY WHILE I AGAIN ATTEMPTED TO CHANGE THEIR MINDS. I REPEATED MY EARLIER POINTS INCLUDING PARTICULARLY THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MESSAGES FROM THESE PARTICULAR SENATORS, THE FACT THAT THE PRESIDENTIAL HAND VIS-A-VIS CONGRESS WOULD BE STRENGTHENED AFTER AN ELECTION, THAT I COULD NOT SEE THE CONGRESS LEAVING JORDAN WITH HALF AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM, CONCLUDING WITH THE MAKE-WEIGHT ARGUMENT THAT I HAD NEVER ADVISED JORDAN BADLY IN THE PAST. IT WAS TO NO AVAIL. KING HUSSEIN FEELS HURT AND HUMILIATED. HIS SENTIMENTS CAN BE SUMMARIZED BY HIS FINAL COMMENT, "I KNEW THE ISRAELIS WERE STRONG BUT I DID NOT REALIZE THAT THEY WERE THAT STRONG." HE TRACED HIS BEHAVIOR SINCE THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 242 IN 1967, POINTED OUT THAT HE HAD WORKED HARD AND UNFAILINGLY FOR A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE, BUT THAT HE NOW FOUND HIMSELF AND HIS COUNTRY FACED ONLY WITH "DANGER AND ISRAELI ARROGANCE". HE POINTED OUT THAT HIS COUNTRY DESPERATELY NEEDS AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM AND THAT HE WANTED TO BUY IT FROM THE UNITED STATES BECAUSE OF PAST RELATIONSHIPS RATHER THAN BECAUSE HE COULD NOT HAVE GOT A BETTER BARGAIN ELSEWHERE. HE SAID HIS ADMISSION THAT THE ABSENCE OF AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM HAD KEPT HIM OUT OF THE 1973 WAR HAD NOW BEEN TURNED BY THE ISRAELIS AS AN SECRET

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ARGUMENT AGAINST HIM AND AN EXCUSE TO KEEP HIM DEFENSELESS. UNDERLINING THAT HE HAD BEGGED THE SAUDIS FOR THE MONEY TO BUY AIR DEFENSE, HE CAME DOWN HARD ON THE FACT THAT HE COULD NOT SPEND THEIR MONEY WITH A CHANCE OF ONLY BUYING HALF AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM. "THEY KNOW THAT THE ISRAELIS OVERFLY AMMAN DAILY AND ARROGANTLY BREAK THE SOUND BARRIER AND LEAVE THEIR CONTRAILS IN OUR SKY." "IN ANY EVENT THIS LAST MOVE ON THE PART OF THE

CONGRESS IS JUST TOO MUCH," THE KING STATED, ADDING, "I HAVE NO PRECONCEIVED PLAN OF WHAT TO DO NEXT."

5. DURING FEW MOMENTS WHICH I HAD WITH RIFAI BEFORE THE KING JOINED US, THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD ME THAT THE JORDANIANS HAD COMMUNICATED WITH THE ISRAELIS THROUGH THEIR SPECIAL CHANNEL TO ASK THEM WHY, IF JORDAN WAS GOING TO BE ABLE TO GET AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, THE ISRAELIS WERE GOING TO SUCH LENGTHS TO PREVENT THIS BY LOBBYING IN THE US CONGRESS. THE ISRAELI REPLY, ALLEGED TO BE FROM PRIME MINISTER RABIN, HE SHOWED ME. IT WAS IN ENGLISH, IT IN EFFECT CONCEDED THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD BEEN PRESSURING THE CONGRESS SINCE IT AGREED TO GIVE CAREFUL THOUGHT TO THE PROBLEM, AND ENDED UP WITH AN EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION TO THE JORDANIANS FOR INFORMATION THEY HAD BEEN PROVIDING ON TERRORISTS AND TERRORIST ACTIVITY. (I SAY THAT THE MESSAGE WAS "ALLEGED TO BE FROM PRIME MINISTER RABIN", BECAUSE EXCHANGES IN THIS SPECIAL CHANNEL HAVE THE PRINCIPALS DESIGNATED BY CODE WORDS.)
HELMS

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